

May 25, 1961

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH KHRUSHCHEV

Vienna, June 3-4, 1961

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Position Paper

Cuba

(To be raised at Soviet initiative)

Anticipated Soviet Position

Cuba is a truly free and independent country because it has liberated itself completely from political and economic dependence on the United States. Having chosen the socialist pattern of development, Cuba will serve as a model for the other Latin American countries. Neither the United States nor any other country has a right to intervene in Cuba, militarily or otherwise, in order to change its internal system. Attempts by the United States to intervene in Cuba will create a situation fraught with dangerous consequences, both for the United States and for world peace.

Recommended U.S. Position

It is essential that the Soviet Government understand that the presence in the Western Hemisphere of an aggressive dictatorship, subservient to Soviet foreign policy aims and armed with Bloc weapons far in excess of reasonable needs of self-defense, constitutes a threat to the peace and security of the Hemisphere which the United States views with grave concern. Dr. Castro has confirmed that which has long been evident, namely the establishment of a totalitarian system in Cuba. He has abandoned Cuba's inter-American commitments, has clearly led the Cuban people out of the family of American nations, cut their deep cultural and historical ties with the other peoples of Latin America, and has imposed in Cuba a foreign ideology alien to our Hemisphere. Not content with having betrayed the promises which enabled him to come to power in Cuba, Dr. Castro has sought to export his "revolution" by armed expeditions, agitation, subversion and guerrilla warfare, and by calling for mob uprisings against legitimate governments. These developments combined with the intrusion of Soviet power heralded by threats of global war have revealed to the people of the Hemisphere the true dimension and significance of events in Cuba. This Government is certain that neither the Cuban people nor the peoples of this hemisphere will accept this situation as permanent and it is therefore not surprising that they should consider measures to recover an errant member of the family.

The United States on repeated occasions has stated that we would not launch our military forces unilaterally in an unprovoked attack on Cuba. We have taken careful note of Chairman Khrushchev's statement that the U.S.S.R. does not intend to establish bases in Cuba. We would welcome as an indication of the Soviet Union's genuine desire to contribute to a relaxation of tensions evidence

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that the U.S.S.R. intends to cease intervening in the internal affairs of OAS member nations where, through Soviet-supported infiltration and subversion, opponents of orderly social progress seek to destroy legally constituted governments and prevent the peoples of Latin America from fulfilling their aspirations for a better life within a framework of freedom and respect for individual liberty. The United States has embarked upon an alliance for progress with its Latin American neighbors dedicated to the economic and social improvement of the Latin American peoples. We look to the day when Cuba, once again a respected member of the inter-American community, joins in this common undertaking.

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Discussion

Khrushchev will emphasize that Cuba is today a country which has found true freedom and independence because the people of Cuba, led by Fidel Castro, have overthrown the U.S.-supported dictator Batista and torn off the economic shackles clamped on them by U.S. monopolies. It is a Cuba of workers, peasants and intellectuals which is working to lift itself from its age-old poverty and ignorance into a peaceful, full and abundant life. It has chosen the socialist way to accomplish this and will receive all the support it needs from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Cuba's example may well prove irresistibly contagious for other Latin American countries.

In commenting upon those points the President may wish to state that Khrushchev is apparently misinformed about conditions in Cuba both before and since Castro came to power. Cuba enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in Latin America before Castro came to power, a condition which is not merely coincidental with the high rate of U.S. private investment there. Reforms were undoubtedly necessary in Cuba, as they are in any nation of the world, and the U.S. repeatedly made manifest to Castro its sympathy with the original aims of his government. He has betrayed his avowed aims, however, imposed a totalitarian state, repressing all opposition in the process. The Cuban people are no longer free to select a road of their own choosing to a peaceful and abundant life.

In turning his back upon the inter-American community, Castro has dismayed the people of the Hemisphere, who cherish the inter-American system, the basis of which rests on the solidarity of the Americas. The historical aspirations for freedom and respect for human rights throughout the Americas unite the peoples of the Hemisphere in rejecting a totalitarian system such as Castro Cuba typifies.

However repugnant the presence of a Communist dictatorship in the Hemisphere may be, the U.S. will not launch its armed forces in an unprovoked attack on Cuba. The publicly declared intention of the Castro regime to export its revolution, however, constitutes one of the major sources of concern in the Hemisphere and one of the focal points of unrest from which armed conflict can erupt. The problems that Cuba creates in the Hemisphere are the Hemisphere's business and will be resolved within the system and traditions of the Americas.

Khrushchev may also embark upon a moral lecture, with threatening overtones, on the rights of nations. His main theme will probably be that no country has a right to prevent the Cuban people from arranging their domestic affairs in the manner they see fit. Any attempt by a foreign power, or powers, to intervene in Cuba's internal affairs will be successfully repulsed by the Cuban people themselves, with all necessary assistance from their friends in the socialist countries. (This was amply demonstrated in the case of the recent U.S.-sponsored aggression against Cuba.) The attempt by the U.S. to

arrogate

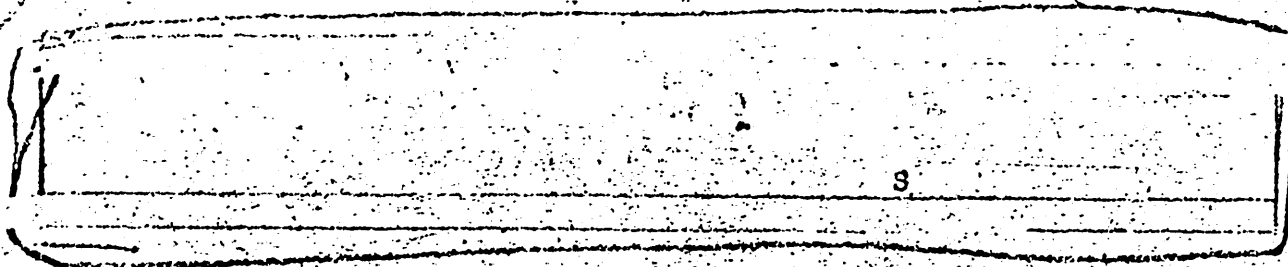
arrogate to itself the immoral and unlawful "right" to employ force, whenever it deems it necessary, to suppress people who are determined to take the socialist path of development is a highly dangerous road. It is for this reason that President Kennedy's statements of April 20 to the American Society of Newspaper Editors have filled the entire world with alarm. The U.S.S.R. sincerely hopes the U.S. will abandon any pretensions of this kind it may still hold, follow the principle of "live and let live" in its relations with Cuba and settle its problems with Cuba by peaceful means. If it does not, however, but embarks on another adventure against Cuba, a situation fraught with serious consequences, above all for the U.S. itself, will be created. In our century, such misdeeds do not go unpunished.

Khrushchev probably will be careful to avoid any embarrassing specific commitments to render Castro all-out military support. Realizing his impotence to give Castro effective military support short of running grave risks of nuclear war (which in the final analysis he would have no intention of doing) Khrushchev will concentrate on maximizing the political price for any overt U.S. action.

In addition to rejecting categorically Khrushchev's right to engage in lectures on intervention particularly at a time when the U.S.S.R. is supplying arms to rebels in Laos, the President may wish to point out that the Cuban people have no opportunity to determine their future. Elections in Cuba today (which Castro has arbitrarily ruled out) could not be held in an atmosphere of free political competition and would only reveal the degree of intimidation to which the populace has been subjected. Due to the harsh repressive measures invoked by the Cuban police state, the Cuban people had no opportunity to demonstrate their approval of the actions taken by their compatriots who sought to liberate their country from tyranny on April 17.

While the Hemispheric problem of Cuba is being resolved in Hemispheric fashion, should the Soviet Union, in addition to the arms it has already supplied, decide to intrude its armed force as a factor in the situation, a glance at the map should suffice to determine who has wandered far afield on risky adventures.

Khrushchev may attempt to draw a parallel between the U.S.-Cuban relationship and that of the U.S.S.R. and nations on its perimeter such as Iran. The President may wish to reply that the two situations are not similar. There has been a tradition of friendship between Cuba and the United States since Cuba's independence from Spain. While we held no brief for Batista, who was one of the dictators that appear on the Latin American scene, we did have normal relations with his government. Only since Castro came to power has Cuba by its acts and attitudes engaged in a vicious and continuously hostile campaign to discredit the United States and break the long-standing ties of friendship. The nations bordering on the Soviet Union have requested and received military assistance from the U.S. for defensive purposes. At the same time, however, these nations have endeavored to maintain amicable relations with the U.S.S.R..



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